

A Dissertation

on

Police

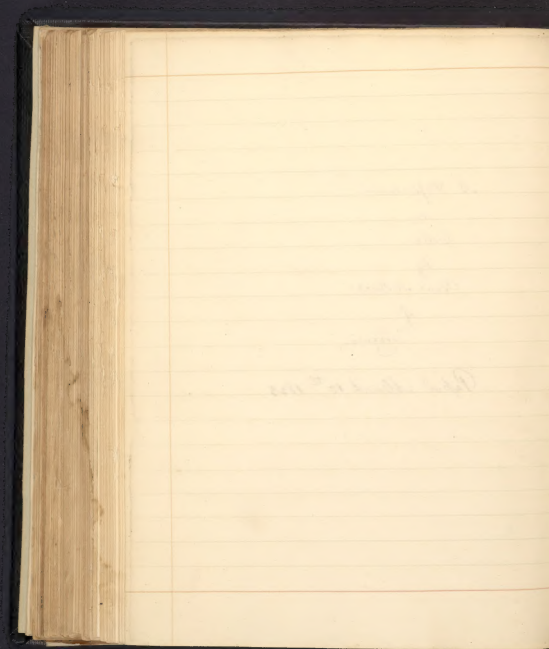
by

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of

Virginia

Read March 12th 1823



Colic

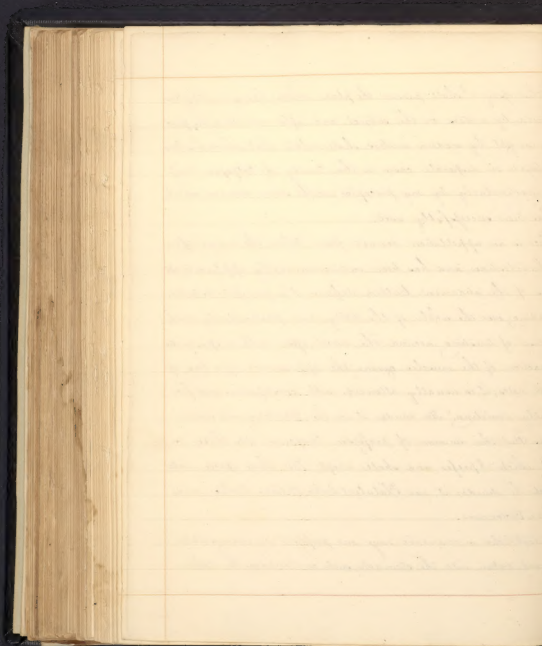
A disease of such frequent occurrence as Colic, it might be supposed was so perfectly understood, as to leave but little room for improvement in the practice. It will not be denied that the energetic employment of the remedies usually recommended will generally relieve it; yet cases sometimes occur in which the most prompt and judicious employment of the ordinary remedies have no effect in arresting the most painful disease.

Having observed the beneficial effects of Emetics in those intractable cases, and seeing but little notice taken of them by writers on the subject, (who if they notice them at all) speak so lightly on the subject, that they rarely impress the student with the necessity of using them, particularly when he sees, that the most disagreeable symptoms of the disease, with which he has to contend, is the rejection of the contents of the stomach, and sometimes even of the intestines by vomiting. For this reason I have selected this disease as the subject of my 'Dissertations, and should it have the effect of awakening the attention of others to the subject, I shall have effected all that I expect.

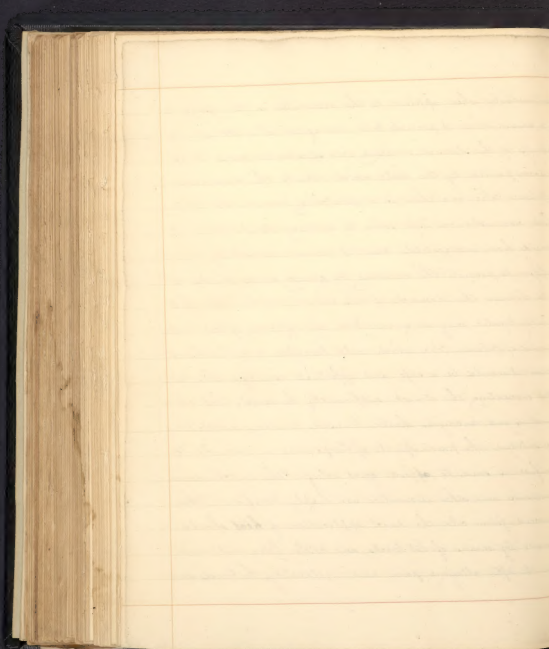
In this essay I shall pursue the plan which has generally been observed, by writers on the subject, and after detailing the practice taught by modern writers, shall relate that which has been employed in desperate cases in the County of Culpeper Virg. (and particularly by my preceptor) with some cases in which it has been successfully used.

Colic is an appellation derived from *Coler* the name of one of the intestines, and has been indiscriminately applied to all pains of the abdomen. Cullen defines it "a painful distention, spreading over the whole of the belly, and particularly, with a sense of twisting around the navel, often with a spasmodic contraction of the muscles, giving the appearance of a bag of round balls; it is usually attended with constipation and frequently vomiting." He divides it in his *Pathology* into seven species. But the division of professor Chapman, into three, is that which I prefer, and shall adopt. The three species into which he divides it, are *Flatulent Colic*, *Dilicious Colic*, and *Colica Pictonum*.

Flatulent Colic is occasioned says our professor by indigestible aliment, taken into the stomach, such as Cabbage &c. Cold.



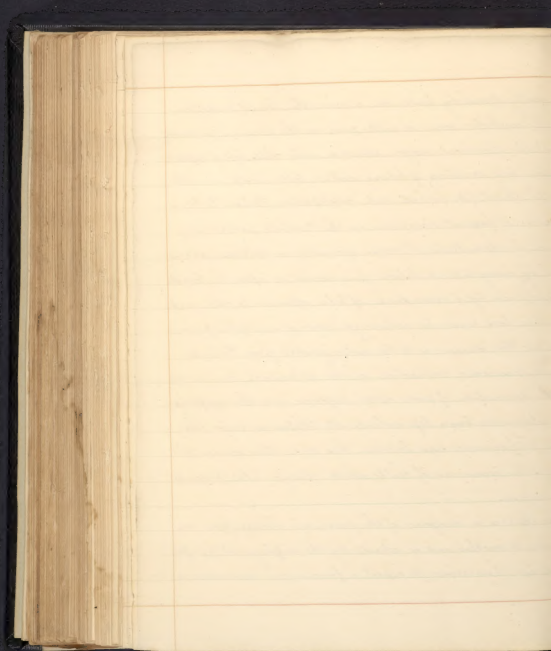
particularly when applied to the extremities, is also ascribed
as a cause. When it proceeds from indigestion, it is attended by
sickness of the stomach, vomiting, and spasmodic pains, it is
unaccompanied by the chill which attends the commencement
of Bilious Colic, and there is a rumbling noise in the intestines,
which circumstances will serve to distinguish it. When it
proceeds from indigestible aliment we are advised by the
physicists to promote the vomiting by giving warm drinks, so
as to cleanse the stomach, if this should not have the effect,
a mild Emetic may be given. From the efficacy of Tart. Emetic
in cases of Bilious Colic which will hereafter be noticed I should
suppose it would be a safe and effectual remedy in this case.
After evacuating the stomach sufficiently, he directs that car-
minatives and anodynes should be used to allay irritability,
and subdue the pains. Spirits of Turpentine in doses of a tea-
spoonfull, is said to afford great relief. Ether and Laudanum
Cinnamon, and other aromatics are highly beneficial. When
it proceeds from cold the direct applications of heat should
be made by means of hot bricks, and bottles filled with warm
water &c. After allaying pain and irritability, the bowels should



be gently opened by castor oil or some other lenient purgative.

Bilious colic comes on with pain in the abdomen particularly about the umbilical region, attended with chill, loss of appetite, nausea, and vomiting of bilious matter, bitter taste in the mouth, thirst, febrile heat and constipation. Bilious colic is a disease of frequent occurrence in the U. States particularly in the Southern States. It occurs generally in Autumn, and is said by many to be a bilious fever turned in upon the bowels. It is produced by a redundancy of bile, exposure to cold and moisture, long continued coitiveness, derangement of the primæ viæ, &c. This disease is to be distinguished from Enteritis by the spasmodic contractions of the abdominal muscles, and by the diminution of pain upon pressure, and the symptoms of inflammation being less violent. Dr. Chapman says the great pathognomonic sign between this and other species of colic is the occurrence of chills which always takes place in this disease.

When there is a remission of the pain, or a change from one situation to another, and is relieved by the employment of proper remedies, we have reason to expect a favourable termination;



but on the contrary when the pain continues fixed, increasing
in violence or suddenly comes attended with cold sweats, or
perhaps it is an unfavorable omen. When the disease proves
fatal the usual appearance on dissection, are inflammation,
distension and irregular ^{in texture} of some part of the intestinal tube.

The indications of cure in this disease are to remove the
obstruction of the intestinal tube, and to evacuate the accumulated
mass. When there is much inflammation which is generally the
case in this disease, no physician would hesitate to employ
dissection until the inflammation was completely subdued.
We are to be regulated in the employment of this remedy by
the pulse and the effect produced. It will sometimes require
a very liberal use of the lancet, to be good cause of some great
benefit. Doct Chapman says he has seen the disease so far
overcome by this remedy, as to be the cause of very little trouble
to the practitioner. If there is great irritability of the stomach
it has been recommended to give Op. by means of the opium
recumbent draught with the addition of Laudanum, or a
few drops of opium, but of nausea only prevent, we are to make use
of Chamomile tea, Tincture of sweet wood, and anodyne injections.



Opium is said to have been beneficial, but objections are made to the employment of opium by the mouth on account of its liability to be rejected, but Doct. Chapman says he would advise it to be used in the form of an enema. The warm bath is very useful and is said to act like a charm, producing a mitigation of all the violent symptoms. As an external application fomentations or flannel cloths wrung out in a warm decoction of a colic herb, a bladder filled with warm water or bladder may be applied to that part which is most painful. Our next object is to carry off the offending matter, which is to be done by Glysters, followed by purgatives. The Glysters are to be employed to overcome the constipation which is generally attendant on this affection, for this purpose a great many sedatives have been recommended a Tart Emetic in the quantity of ʒj or ʒjss or ʒij in ʒij or ʒij of water, it induces great relaxation. The Tobacco in an enema is also highly recommended in this disease, it may be used in two ways either in the form of an enema or an infusion of the leaves. It should be used in the quantity of ʒj to a pint of water, except half the quantity at a time; but so powerful are the effects of this remedy that it



now is the greatest success in the administration of this and
there is too great a quantity of water up the column without analgesia
can be overcome but must make use of paregoric, for this
purpose the least use or sometimes not needed in the
Chapman formula but now given with. But the most beneficial
usage of the Chapman is a combination of Salomet & Opium. If
of Opium is gr. xv of Salomet is given every three or four hours.
This combination operates in two ways: the Opium relaxes the
spasm of the intestines, and the Salomet sweeps out the intestine
and the diarrhea yields. The last article, generally recommended
upon which we can place any reliance a $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of castor oil
given by the mouth this has been successful when symptoms
of constipation were present. Another as will hereafter be
seen has been advantageously employed in this form of the
disease.

The third form of it, which I shall now mention is that of Chronic
Hemonorrhoea. This disease is said to be of less frequent occurrence
than formerly. It is characterized by a pain at the pit of the
stomach extending downward to the intestines, particularly around
the navel, accompanied with eructations, thirst, sickness, vomiting,



Spasmodic, viz. constipation and an ineffectual desire to evacuate the bowels of their contents, and a tendency to paralyze of the extremities, more particularly of the hands.

It is, however, at one time supposed to be caused by the pressure arising from the decomposition of uric acids, but it has since been found to proceed from many other causes, as the use of acrid food, acid drinks, cold, long continued catarrhs, irregularity in the mode of living, and an accumulation of bile. It is distinguished from Salacious Colic by the symptoms of inflammation being less violent, the pulse being quick and contracted. In relation of the pain and the local position of the organ to which it is paid, it is more permanent, and the tendency to paralyze not so extensive as from other causes of the bowels.

In mitigation of case are the same as in the other species of Colic, viz. to relieve the action of the bowels, and assist their action by means of cathartics and enemata of opium. If the symptoms are violent indicating inflammation we administer the laudanum freely, notwithstanding the spasmodic state of the pulse. The next thing to be done is to remove the



spasm which is to be relieved by the use of either Opium, or
the extreme gentleness and the plentiful use of Opium,
which has been recommended from the era of the revo-
lution, mostly opiumed; but the combination of Opium and
sassafras is to be preferred. The best treatment of dysentery in the
case of a child is a full dose of Opium salt, it will answer
very well for the purpose of securing the stomach and
if this should fail we must resort to enemas and induce
an uneasy warm bath and the application of blisters to the
abdomen. Altho' it is said to be very useful in the case of
dysentery, five or six hours. Much has been said of Mercury
in this disease, of the efficacy of which we have the testimony
of Dr. Chapin and it is that great reliance is to be
placed on this article even to remove the disease in the
seizure when they occur. The mercury should be used
until salivation is produced. The flannel roller has been re-
commended to prevent a predisposition to the disease. These
constitute the treatment usually employed in the several
forms of Colic. I have before suggested the use of turpentine which
have been frequently found to relieve Kopke's case of the



disease. The form of the disease is which has been most
particularly described is the *Spasmodic* form. It is the most common in the
country where the disease is the country of the *Spasmodic* form. It is
almost invariably associated with the *Spasmodic* form. The physicians
usually commence the cure in the manner described is without
by means of bleeding, purge, injection. But when the disease
is not so mild as these remedies, and the patient can retain nothing
in the stomach an Emulsion of Turpentine is administered.
The effect of this remedy are attended by a slight remedy is
greatly diminishes the pain. It is associated with the
disease, and in some instances, evacuations from the bowels may
when given without further aid. But generally, emulsion does
less immediately as soon as the operation of the emulsion is over,
which rarely fails to induce copious evacuations from the bowels.
The bowels are afterwards kept open by either oil or even a
gentle laxative, which completes the cure &c.

It is dangerous as the use of *Opium* appears to be when continued
for a considerable time, it is remarkable that very few cases
of the disease may be taken without any great commencement
of *Opium* being in the case known as the *Spasmodic* form.



principally of, nutritious broths, &
other medicines to the abdomen un-
der which treatment she rapidly re-
covered.

Dr. John P. Wilson

Case. I was called to S. P. a few
weeks after parturition, to examine
her labours under what she cal-
led a malignant Cox, she stated that
a short time after she had been con-
fined she was attacked with pain
in the abdomen, extending through
the loins, with a sense of weight
and frequent inclination to stoop
down, at which time she had a
discharge of a thin fetid fluid;
but that it gave her no relief;
at this time her pulse was in-
creased frequent, and weak, and
her appetite much impaired; as

there was no relief from the dis-
charges, I thought it proceeded from
impacted feces in the large intestine
and ordered a dose of St. Rictor which
was to be repeated until it should
operate; it did not till after sev-
eral doses had been given; then a
large mass of hard feces which
melt very bad was discharged she
said that they melted so bad that
it caused her to faint; after this
discharge she soon recovered.

2nd Case

I was called to see D. by
a little boy in the family of Capt
Conner. He complained of great
pain in his bowels with frequent
inclination to go to stool and would
strain violently when on the
chair; he had a thin liquid



no practice, though he has used it in three countries. I have
from respectable authority that during the last war while
the army was in winter quarters at Lunenburg Station
many of the officers and soldiers were affected with diseases
of the bowels. An army surgeon resorted to the use of pills of
Opium and Recetas of Lead in all cases of Dysentery. Several
thousands were cured with success in many obstinate cases.
He became so pleased with the remedy, that he gave it out by
bars just without restricting his patients as to the time of con-
tinuing it. He administered it unmixed, then in beer and
strong beer of the most premium quality. As this was in the
army, they were much pleased with the first effects of the
remedy, after then each of them had one of the pills to carry
in their pockets, &c. &c. and whenever their mouths were threatened
with the disease, unfortunately they had occasion to
use it too late, and became affected with all their dreadful
symptoms, which the lead is productive, excruciating pains
in the bowels, paralytic, &c. &c. Those symptoms carried on of
them at least, (and I think my informant saw both to the
grave regrettably by the whole army). These cases while they point



to the importance of this admonition against continuing the use of it for any considerable time.

The following are cases in which Emetics have been employed in Colic.

1st On the 31st of September a strong healthy negro woman belonging to Mr. S. of Surpiper while within a certain distance from home was suddenly affected with Colic so to render it necessary to carry her home in a palanquin. She was called in, he found her rolling and tossing herself about and crying aloud with pain, and vomiting every thing up that was given her to drink. The pulse was not remarkably altered from that of health. On feeling the abdomen, the integuments appeared quite flaccid, and the intestines could be distinctly felt twisting and turning about in the most violent manner. Her arm was let up, and 1℥ss of blood taken, afterwards 30 ℥ss of Laudanum were administered. The pain and commotion of the bowels were somewhat abated for a short time, but in an hour returned almost as violently as ever. An injection containing Mustard Oil was then prepared



and 60 grs of Tinct. Op. added to it, it was retained, in a short
time and then came away without effect. The injections were
repeated several times, emulating the Tinct. Op., without inducing
any fecal discharge. The stomach being somewhat quiet, a
large dose of Castor Oil was administered. There was a good
deal of retching after taking it, but it was believed that the
oil was retained. She was left in the care of the family for the
night, with directions to administer an Enema if the medicine
should not operate in three hours, and administer an infusion
of Senna and Cream of Tartar as the circumstance of the case
required. Next morning 4th she was still unrelied the injection
and 30 grs of chronic infusions of Senna was then administered
the attendants believe that there was a partial discharge of
feces sometime in the night. She was then put into the warm
bath and an enema composed of the infusion of Senna and
Castor Oil administered without affording relief. Pills composed
of Calomel grs X and Opium grs I were directed to be given every
two hours. Doses of the pills were taken without effect. It was
then determined to resort to an Emetic. ʒss IV of Sait. Emetic
dissolved in an ounce of warm water were given. The medicine

and about 10 o'clock, when the female received from a friend
word, after this the water I carried a quantity, as was the manner
of water did not even administer, which operated especially
and really relieved the pain, but day 4th. The patient was
terrible, very soon felt the same about the abdomen, water
at once ceased, 6th. The patient was much better, however sufficient
attention to the state of the breast and distended ducts,
after which there was no necessity for further care.

2^d. A negro woman belonging to Mr. B. was attacked some time in
the month of October with Colic, a physician of this place was called
for her, who was a variety of the usual remedies, after attending
her two days he was prevented from visiting her as even in the family
sickness, and her case appearing more alarming, another physician
was called in, he immediately administered an Emetic, about
the time of the operation, the other physicians arrived after
knowing what had been given he administered an Emetic. The pa-
tient will never survive it. It is amazing all that I have ever
known, having never been able to make a Cathartic stick to it
today. The diet was upon the rectification of water, &c.

coming directly the source of that which had predicted. Soon
after the operation of the trachea, discharges for some came on.
(I think I was informed without the assistance of any thing
else, but of this I can't speak positively, from which time the
patient's recovery was progressive.

3^d On the 18th of December my preceptor was requested to visit
Capt. J. M. (a respectable farmer near the mountains in Susquehanna)
in consultation with Dr. Stetson, the attending physician. We
found him in all the agonies of a most violent Bilious Colic;
with a countenance almost apoplectic and comatose, incontinence.
The attending physician states that he had been attacked eight
days previously, and that he had done every thing he could
think of applicable to his case. Bleeding, purgatives, enemata,
opiates, warm bath, blisters &c. had each been employed without
affording more than temporary relief; no discharge of faeces
since he had visited him. He had last been taking pills of Cal-
omel and Opium. The effects of emetics in other cases of the
kind were explained, and proposed to him. He readily consented
to their use, observing that he had to acknowledge that relief

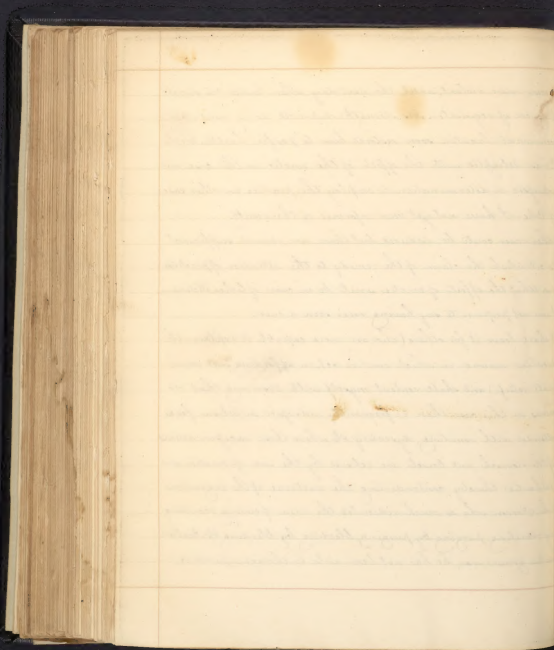
been more unsuccessful in curing bilious colic than almost
any disease he was to contend with in his medical career, and
if it should succeed in so hopeless a case as the present one
was, would it effect in any case of the kind. Two grains
of cast. rhubarb were then made into two pills with the mucus
of bread, and given to him. The pills were retained long enough
to produce the wished for effect, on the stomach. The attack
was thrown up a copious peristaltic movement, and he became
much easier. About an hour after the emetic a domestic an-
guish, similar to some which had previously been cured was
administered, it was retained so long that there present began
to despair of its operation, but as he seemed quiet, it was thought
best not to disturb him. The physicians retired to an adjacent
room, where they had not remained long, before they were apprised
by an edema which could not be mistaken, the patient had a
copious evacuation, and several others followed in the course
of the night. Next morning he was greatly relieved, had sleep
much and had some inclination to eat. He was however extremely
debilitated; it was therefore agreed to nourish him by animal
soup &c. and not give him anything unless the pain should



become more violent, until the next day, when castor oil should be given if requisite. His strength improved daily and an occasional laxative soon restored him to perfect health. Doct. F. was delighted with the effect of the emetic in this case and expressed a determination to employ the practice in other cases of Colic, I have not yet been informed of the result.

Other cases could be adduced, but these are deemed sufficient to establish the claim of the remedy to the attention of practitioners. What the effects of emetics would be in cases of Colica Pictoria I am not prepared to say having never seen a case.

I shall leave it for others (who are more capable to explain the peculiar manner in which emetics act, in affording such immediate relief,) and shall content myself with observing that no ^{more} occurs in this case than is frequently witnessed, in bilious fevers attended with vomiting, dysentery &c. where those excretive actions of the stomach and bowels are relieved by the use of emetics and cathartics thereby contradicting the doctrine of the ingenious John Brown who so much ridiculed the idea of curing vomiting by vomiting, purging by purging, bleeding by bleeding &c. Beated as his genius was, he has not been able to change a practice.



which experience has proven so efficacious. ^{to be} I claim the attention
of the illustrious professors of this institution, for the many errors
which they may discover in this juvenile production. I beg
leave to express to them my gratitude for the indefatigable
zeal which they have shown in setting forth the correct
principles of the several branches which they profess. Long
may they continue in the successful discharge of those im-
portant duties.

